DAILY PILGRIMAGE TO PURGATORY

Nihil Obstat:

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Daily Pilgrimage to Purgatory

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Origin Of The Daily Pilgrimage To Purgatory

IN the writings of St. Margaret Mary we find the following exhortation: "In union with the divine Heart of Jesus make a short pilgrimage to Purgatory at night. Offer Him all your activities of the day and ask Him to apply His merits to the suffering souls. At the same time implore them to obtain for you the grace to live and die in the love and friendship of this divine Heart. May He never find in you any resistance to His holy will, nor any wish to thwart His designs in your regard. Fortunate will you be, if you succeed in obtaining deliverance for some of these imprisoned souls, for you will gain as many friends in heaven."

This pious practice which St. Margaret Mary recommended to her novices for the octave of All Souls, was introduced to the members of the Archconfraternity of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart in the year 1885. Since then many of the faithful have made this pilgrimage daily. Our world-wide Archconfraternity, therefore, would seem to have been chosen by divine Providence to obtain comfort and deliverance for many souls in Purgatory.

In a letter of recommendation, given on January 5, 1884, His Eminence, Cardinal Mon-

aco la Valette, Vicar General of His Holiness, sanctioned the propagation of the "Daily Pilgrimage to Purgatory." On October 8 of the following year, his successor, Cardinal Parochi, deigned not only to honor us with a letter of approbation, but also delivered a splendid sermon on this practice in the church of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart in Rome, in which it had been introduced. May it please the divine Heart of Jesus to use this booklet as a means of spreading this work of sympathetic love for the Poor Souls everywhere. May this most benevolent of hearts extend to all who in any way assist in its circulation, the fullness of His graces and blessings.

Advantages Of This Practice

It is *short* . . . A "Daily Pilgrimage" . . . It requires little more of your time than an ordinary prayer, a religious thought, or a devout ejaculation.

It is *easy* . . . It can be practiced by any one without effort, regardless of age or state of life, at any time, and in any place.

It is *comforting* . . . No more is required than to descend in spirit for a few moments into Purgatory; to petition God to send light, relief and peace to the holy souls; to relieve them of their sufferings, and to hasten the hour of their deliverance.

It is *holy* . . . It is in accordance with the wishes of the Sacred Heart; it increases His

honor; He is our companion on this pilgrimage. We share in His love, and receive from Him light, relief and peace for the suffering souls.

It is *generous* . . . It offers to the Sacred Heart every meritorious deed performed in the course of a day: prayers, mortifications, good works, alms, suffrages of every kind, and places them at His disposal in behalf of the Poor Souls.

It is *inexhaustible* . . . It implores Our Lord and Savior to apply to them the infinite merits of His Life, His Passion and Death, and also those of the Blessed Virgin Mary, St. Joseph and all the Saints.

It is *efficacious* . . . If only you knew with what ardent desire these holy souls long for this new "remedy" which has such efficacy to relieve their sufferings. For this is what St. Margaret Mary calls the devotion to the Sacred Heart.

It is *meritorious* . . . By extending this act of brotherly love to the Poor Souls, our own merits are increased in the same measure as the pious thoughts which it inspires, the good disposition which it creates, the acts of virtue which it prompts.

It goes on *unceasingly* . . . At every moment of the day and night, somewhere on earth members of the Archconfraternity pray for our departed friends according to our intention. There is an uninterrupted sequence of holy Masses, Stations of the Cross, good works, prayers and indulgences. Those whose death we mourn will never be forgotten.

It is *approved* by the Church . . . Many bish-

ops have readily given their approval. His Eminence, the Cardinal Vicar of His Holiness, has recommended it twice in a most explicit manner. The Holy Father himself has deigned to bestow the richest privileges upon the altar of the Poor Souls in the Church of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart in Rome.

It is *favored* by God Himself . . . Numerous spiritual and temporal favors have manifested, again and again, how pleasing this practice is to the Sacred Heart. One may use it with confidence as a means of obtaining the conversion of a sinner, the restoration of health, or a special grace. Very effective also is the promise to promote this devotion if a petition be heard. If the Lord rewards in this life the gift of a cup of cold water, given in His name to the poor, He certainly will reward, even more generously, the help offered for His sake to the Poor Souls.

It is *salutary* . . . By helping the Poor Souls, we assure ourselves their perpetual gratitude; they will pray for us, especially after their entrance into eternal happiness; in particular will they endeavor to obtain for us the grace of a happy death.

"On awaking this morning, on the Sunday of the Good Shepherd," wrote St. Margaret Mary two hundred years ago, "two of my suffering friends came to take leave of me; today the Good Shepherd received them into His eternal home. They left with untold joy and happiness. When I asked them to remember me, they replied: 'Ingratitude has never entered heaven.'

It deserves to be *propagated* . . . O you my Christian friends who read these lines, priests, religious or devout lay-people, help to spread this devotion. It is so simple, and requires so little effort; moreover, you will be rewarded for it. Let at least one tiny drop of water trickle into Purgatory every day. If no one refuses to do so, many souls will be released, and a refreshing stream of grace will flow without ceasing through that prison of fire.

Daily Pilgrimage To Purgatory

Preparation:

(Either one of the following acts or a similar one will suffice).

Prayer.—O St. Margaret Mary, whom the Lord has chosen to reveal to the whole world all the treasures hidden in His merciful Heart of Love! O thou who hast heard how the Poor Souls in Purgatory begged for this new remedy, the devotion to the Sacred Heart which relieves them so effectively of their torments! O thou who hast set free so many of these poor prisoners by practicing this devotion: obtain for us the grace to make this Pilgrimage worthily in the company of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Amen.

Unite your own intentions with those of the faithful who make this pilgrimage daily.

Consecration of the Day:

Divine Heart of Jesus, in making this pilgrimage with Thee as my Companion, I consecrate to Thee all my thoughts, words and actions

of the entire day. I pray Thee to unite my small merits with Thine and to apply them to the Poor Souls, especially the soul of Thy servant, N.N.

Likewise do I entreat you, holy souls, to help me obtain the grace to persevere in love and loyalty toward the Sacred Heart, by submitting readily and without complaint to whatever designs He may have in my regard.

Offering.—Eternal Father, we offer Thee the Blood, Passion and Death of Jesus Christ, and the sorrows of the most holy Mary and St. Joseph, in payment for our sins, in suffrage for the holy souls in Purgatory, for the wants of our Holy Mother the Church, and for the conversion of sinners. Amen.

Ejaculation.—"May the Sacred Heart of Jesus be loved everywhere."
300 days.

"Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, pray for us."
300 days.

"St. Joseph, model and patron of those who love the Sacred Heart, pray for us."
300 days, Plen. Ind. once a month.

Preparatory Meditation:

Let us for a moment, in company with the Sacred Heart, descend in spirit into the consuming flames of Purgatory.

How many of these souls are beginning their painful imprisonment this very moment! How many of them have been there for a long time and shall be there for a longer time to come! And what a holy legion, almost entirely purified

and cleansed at the present moment, shall rise to heaven this very day!

How happy the Poor Souls are! They have escaped hell forever. They are certain to obtain eternal happiness. They are friends of God; they are saved.

And yet, how miserable they are at the same time. They must still suffer temporal punishment for sins which have been already forgiven them. The gates of their heavenly fatherland are still closed to them; they are sentenced to expiating fire.

Behold them in their present plight! Listen to their lamentations! Speak to them a word of friendship and sympathy, and hasten to their assistance!

Sunday

Holy Souls in Purgatory, is there anything you regret when you think of your life on earth?

I deeply regret wasted time . . . . I did not consider it so precious, so fleeting, so irretrievable. For this reason my life was worth only half of what it might have been. Oh, had I but realized it then! Would that I could return to earth, how differently I would use the time given me!

Precious time! . . . Today I know how to appreciate you. You were purchased with the blood of Christ; you were given me for the sole purpose of loving God, sanctifying myself and edifying my neighbor. But alas! I have abused

you by committing sin; I have craved vanity, pleasures and trifles; I have been dreaming dreams which now cause me bitter reproaches and remorse. Precious time . . . Wasted time . . . How heavily you weigh upon me now! How it grieves me to have lost you through my own fault!

Fleeting time . . . . Time which passes so quickly on earth, but which drags so slowly in this prison of fire, in this place of excruciating torments! Formerly, years seemed like days to me. My whole life vanished like a dream.

Hours now seem like years, days like centuries. I must now suffer, weep, and wait, until the last minute of wasted time is redeemed. Oh, how long shall my exile last!

Irretrievable time! On earth I relied on my last years to do penance; but the thread of my life was severed at a moment when I expected it least! O precious time! You were given me to acquire treasures and graces without number, but now you are lost for me forever.

You, who still live on earth, do not waste the gift of time, which has cost Jesus such a high price, and for which you too will have to suffer in Purgatory if you imitate our carelessness.

You, who are privileged to live during a time which is preeminently devoted to the Sacred Heart, during these last centuries when He has revealed to the world His love in its fullness: intercede for us that we may obtain the merits of at least one of these days, in which His grace is so freely and abundantly offered you.

Resolution.—Today I will do everything possible to assist the souls of priests, religious and all those in Purgatory who have been faithful to this devotion all their lives. I also recommend myself to those who are entering heaven at this moment.

Thought for the day.—The sufferings of the souls in Purgatory are so great that a single day appears to them like a thousand years.

Exercise.—Use a few moments of your time to make ejaculations in honor of the divine Heart for the comfort and consolation of the Poor Souls.

Special Intention.—Implore the divine Heart of Jesus to grant relief to the most forsaken soul in Purgatory.

Motive.—The greater the abandonment of a soul, the greater will be its gratitude towards you. It will obtain for you the privilege never to be forsaken by God through the withdrawal of His grace, and never to abandon Him by committing sin.

Prayer.—O Lord God Almighty, I pray Thee, by the Precious Blood which Thy divine Son Jesus shed in the garden, deliver the souls in Purgatory and especially that soul which is most destitute of spiritual aid; and vouchsafe to bring it to Thy glory, there to praise and bless Thee forever. Amen.

Our Father . . . Hail Mary

(The Faithful who devoutly offer prayers for

the Poor Souls, with the intention of doing so for 7 or 9 successive days, may obtain:

An indulgence of 3 years once each day;
A plenary indulgence on the usual conditions at the end of their 7 or 9 days of prayer.

Any form of prayer for the Poor Souls may be used.

De Profundis Psalm 129:

Out of the depths I have cried unto Thee, O Lord: Lord hear my voice. Let Thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplication.

If Thou, O Lord, shalt mark our iniquities: O Lord, who can abide it?

For with Thee there is mercy; and by reason of Thy law I have waited on Thee, O Lord.

My soul hath waited on His word; my soul hath hoped in the Lord.

From the morning watch even unto night: let Israel hope in the Lord.

For with the Lord there is mercy; and with Him is plenteous redemption.

And he shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities.

V. Eternal rest give them, O Lord.

R. And let perpetual light shine upon them.
3 years; 5 years every day in Nov.; Plen. Ind. once a month.

Ejaculation.—Sweet Heart of Jesus, make me love Thee ever more and more.
300 days. Plenary indulgence once a month.

Monday

Holy Souls in Purgatory, is there anything you regret when you think of your life on earth?

I deeply regret my extravagance in the use of earthly possessions . . . . My fortune, my health, my talent, my position in the world, the influence I had, my relatives, my servants, in a word, everything could have been of spiritual benefit to me if only I had known how to use it for the greater honor of the divine Heart. How many graces could I have drawn upon myself! This I neglected to do, and at the hour of my death, all my possessions have come to naught.

Oh, were I but rich today in these my former possessions! Would that I could use them to hasten, even for one moment, the hour of my deliverance; to increase, even by one degree, the glory which God has in store for me; to awaken, if only in one soul now living in the world, the devotion to the divine Heart of Jesus.

My friends, whose fortunes are still at your disposal, use them for the support of your neighbor by generously giving alms to the poor. Use them for the greater honor of God as pious offerings designated for the propagation of the devotion to His Sacred Heart throughout the world.

Pious Exercises

Resolution.—Today I will do everything possible to assist the souls of the faithful departed from all parts of Europe. I also recommend

myself to those who are entering heaven at this moment.

Thought for the day:

"The gates of heaven are opened by alms." (St. John Chrys. hom. 32 in Ep. ad Heb.)

Exercise.—Give an alms for the propagation of the devotion to the divine Heart of Jesus.

Special Intention.—Pray for the soul which is nearest to heaven.

Motive.—The closer a soul is to the end of its sufferings, the more ardently will it long for union with the Sacred Heart. Remove, therefore, by your prayers, the obstacles still in its way. In return, it will obtain for you the grace to sever the ties which now prevent you from giving yourself entirely to God.

Prayer.—O Lord God Almighty, I pray Thee, by thy Precious Blood which Thy divine Son Jesus shed in His cruel scourging, deliver the souls in Purgatory, and that soul especially which is nearest to its entrance into Thy glory; that so it may forthwith begin to praise and bless Thee forever. Amen.

Our Father . . . Hail Mary.

Ejaculation: Sweet Heart of Mary, be my salvation!

300 days. Plenary indulgence once a month.

Tuesday

Holy Souls in Purgatory, is there anything you regret when you think of your life on earth?

I deeply regret my neglect of so many splendid graces! They have been offered to me in such abundance, at every moment of my life and with such loving admonitions. . . Spiritual regeneration, vocation and sacraments; word of God, holy inspirations and good examples; graces to protect me in danger, to help me in temptations; the grace of forgiveness for my sins, of indulgences so easily gained . . . . What an incalculable number of the most varied graces!

Some of them I have refused; others I have accepted with coldness; unfortunately, I have misused most of them. I have preferred earthly possessions to the eternal. How I have deceived myself!

Oh, could I but for one moment quench my thirst at the fountains of mercy, flowing from the Sacred Heart! Unfortunately these fountains are spurned by sinners, as they were by me.

You, who behold the inexhaustible stream of graces flow by, why do you not draw from it a few drops for yourself?

Consider what St. Margaret Mary says: "It is certain that everyone on earth could obtain salutary graces without number, if he but had a grateful love for Jesus Christ, such as is manifested by those who love and venerate His Sacred Heart."

Pious Exercises

Resolution.—Today I will do everything possible to assist the souls of the faithful departed

from all parts of Asia, particularly from Palestine and from countries infested with idolatry, schism and heresy. I also recommend myself to those who are entering heaven at this moment.

Thought for the day.—"The benefit of a single grace is greater than all the material value of the whole world." (St. Thomas 1, 2, P, 113a IX ad. 2).

Exercise.—In order to relieve the Poor Souls of their sufferings, I shall offer them today, by way of suffrage, the benefit of some indulgence gained by prayers or some devotional exercise in honor of the divine Heart of Jesus.

Special Intention.—Pray for the soul in Purgatory which is farthest from eternal rest.

Motive.—Let yourself be moved by the abandonment, resignation and humility with which that soul bears its long suffering; it will be grateful to you. Happy will you be, if it obtains for you the virtue of humility in this world, so that you may be exalted in the next.

Prayer.—O Lord Almighty, I pray Thee by the Precious Blood which Thy divine Son Jesus shed in the bitter crowning of thorns, deliver the souls in Purgatory, and in particular that soul which would be the last to depart out of this place of suffering, that it may not tarry so long before it comes to praise Thee in Thy glory and bless Thee for ever. Amen.

Our Father . . . . Hail Mary.

Eternal Father, I offer Thee the Precious Blood of Jesus Christ in satisfaction for my sins,

and in supplication for the Holy Souls in Purgatory, and for the needs of the Holy Church. 500 days. Plenary indulgence once a month if said daily.

Wednesday

Holy Souls in Purgatory, is there anything you regret when you think of your life on earth?

I deeply regret the evil which I have done. In the world, evil seemed so easy, so pleasant. In the midst of pleasures I silenced the voice of conscience. Today my faults weigh me down; their bitterness torments me; their memory persecutes and tortures me.

Mortal sins, forgiven, but not atoned for, venial sins, small imperfections. Too late to detest you in Purgatory! Just punishment must now take its course.

Oh, if I could return to life again! No promise, be it ever so tempting, no riches, no flattery, could induce me to commit even the smallest sin!

My friends, you who are still free to choose between God and the world, gaze upon the crown of thorns, upon the cross, upon all the sufferings which your sins have brought upon the Sacred Heart! Think of the sorrow which these sins and faults will cause you in Purgatory, and you will be able to avoid them without effort.

If you long for the grace to resist Satan when he tempts you, consider what St. Margaret Mary

says: "I cannot believe that persons consecrated to this divine Heart will ever be lost; neither do I believe that they will fall into the hands of Satan by committing a mortal sin, after having given themselves entirely to Him. For they will make every effort to honor, love and glorify this divine Heart, and to follow His designs in their regard willingly and without reserve."

Pious Exercises

Resolution.—Today I will do everything possible to assist the souls of the faithful departed from Africa, particularly from those countries in Africa which were formerly Catholic, and are now returning to our holy Faith. I also recommend myself to those who are entering heaven at this moment.

Thought for the day.—"What doth it profit a man, if he gain the whole world and suffer the loss of his own soul?" (Math. 16, 25).

Exercise.—Make an act of contrition in union with the souls in Purgatory, before a picture of the Sacred Heart.

Special intention.—Pray for the soul richest in merits.

Motive.—The more exalted a soul is in heaven, the more effective will be its request for true love of God for you, without which there is no real merit.

Prayer.—O Lord God Almighty, I pray Thee, by the Precious Blood which Thy Divine Son Jesus shed in the streets of Jerusalem, when He

carried the Cross upon His sacred shoulders, deliver the souls in Purgatory, and especially that soul which is richest in merits before Thee, that so, in that throne of glory which awaits it, it may magnify Thee and bless Thee forever. Amen.

Our Father . . . . Hail Mary.

Ejaculation.—Jesus, Mary, Joseph, I give you my heart and my soul.

Jesus, Mary, Joseph, assist me in my last agony.

Jesus, Mary, Joseph, may I breathe forth my soul in peace with you.

Seven years for each invocation. Plenary indulgence once a month.

Thursday

Holy Souls in Purgatory, is there anything you regret when you think of your life on earth?

I deeply regret the scandal which I have given! Oh, if I had to grieve over my own faults only . . . If only I would have prevented, in the hour of my health, the disastrous consequences of the scandal of which I was the cause. If only I could detain from this place of darkness the many souls that followed my sad example and listened to my pernicious teachings! But no! Through my fault the evil goes on, and perhaps, will spread over a period of years and centuries. And now I have to give an account of all the sins for which I am to blame!

Oh, were I but able to let my sad words resound unto the ends of the earth and to wander through the world as a preacher of penance! With what untiring zeal would I labor among souls in order to estrange them from evil and return them to virtue.

O you my friends on earth, who come to visit me in this dark prison in order to let a ray of salutary light shine upon me: you shall find in the Sacred Heart the surest and easiest way of bringing back to God as many souls as I have led into sin by bad example!

Tell them that "this divine Heart is a fortress and a sanctuary for those who desire to escape divine justice by seeking refuge in Him. For the number of sins committed at the present time is so great, that they challenge a just Creator to punish the sinner swiftly and severely."

Pious Exercises

Resolution.—Today I will do everything possible to assist the souls of the faithful departed from North and South America, especially those from my native town. I also recommend myself to those who are entering heaven at this moment.

Thought for the day.—"The Son of man will render to everyone according to his works." (Math. 16, 27).

Exercise.—Give to someone a picture or a book, treating of the Sacred Heart.

Special Intention.—Pray for the soul which had the greatest devotion to the Most Blessed Sacrament.

Motive.—That soul will obtain for you the grace to receive Holy Communion worthily at the hour of death as a pledge of your eternal salvation.

Prayer.—O Lord God Almighty, I pray Thee, by the Precious Blood of Thy divine Son Jesus, which He gave with His own hands upon the eve of His Passion to His beloved Apostles to be their food and drink, and which He left to His whole Church to be a perpetual sacrifice and life-giving food of His own faithful people, deliver the souls in Purgatory, and especially that one which was most devoted to this mystery of infinite love, that it may with Thy same divine Son, and with Thy Holy Spirit, ever praise Thee for Thy love therein in eternal glory. Amen.

Our Father . . . . Hail Mary.

Ejaculation.—My Jesus! Mercy!

300 days. Plenary indulgence once a month.

Friday

Holy Souls in Purgatory, is there anything you regret when you think of your life on earth?

I deeply regret my neglect of acts of mortification. How easy they would have been on earth, but how difficult they are now in Purgatory. Here the smallest suffering is more poign-

ant than the most cruel torments on earth. In the world it meant only patience and resignation in the hardships and adversities of my life; it meant only giving from my surplus to the poor, and devoting myself to works of atonement; it meant only gaining indulgences and performing works of piety. Nothing could have been easier, and my Purgatory would have been shortened considerably.

If God would but grant me the grace to exchange the years during which I must still remain in this place of sorrow for as many years of life on earth! No commands would be too severe for me; no pains could frighten me; the most difficult works of penance would be sweet and give me comfort at the thought of this consuming fire.

You who now smart under the insignificant trials and hardships of this life! You who now earn your daily bread by the sweat of your brow, rejoice! The smallest suffering endured in the spirit of atonement and offered to the Sacred Heart in the spirit of expiation will save you from a long and painful Purgatory.

Pious Exercises

Resolution.—Today I will do everything possible to assist the souls of the faithful departed from the far distant countries of Oceania, particularly from the most difficult, severely tried Catholic mission districts. I also recommend

myself to those who are entering heaven at this moment.

Thought for the day.—"Bring forth therefore worthy fruits of penance." (Luke 3, 8).

Exercise.—Offer to the Sacred Heart a little act of mortification for the relief of the suffering souls in Purgatory.

Special Intention.—Pray for the souls for which you are most bound to pray.

Motive.—If you are indebted to these souls by an obligation of justice, do not postpone it, because this may call down the wrath of God upon yourself.

Prayer.—O Lord God Almighty, I pray Thee, by the Precious Blood which Thy divine Son shed on this day upon the wood of the cross, especially from His most sacred hands and feet, deliver the souls in Purgatory, and in particular that soul for which I am most bound to pray; that no neglect of mine may hinder it from praising Thee in Thy glory and blessing Thee forever. Amen.

Our Father . . . . Hail Mary.

Ejaculation.—Jesus, meek and humble of heart, make my heart like unto Thine.
500 days. Plenary indulgence once a month.

Saturday

Holy Souls in Purgatory, is there anything you regret when you think of your life on earth?

I deeply regret the little amount of charity

I have shown towards the Poor Souls during my life on earth . . . I could have been of such great service to them, since a Catholic can bring so much light and peace to these poor, suffering prisoners. I could have helped them by my prayers, mortifications, alms, good works, holy Communions and holy Masses, the latter, either by having them said for the Poor Souls or by attending them, especially those celebrated in honor of the Sacred Heart. I would have obtained numerous graces which would have made it easier for me to avoid sin. Moreover, I would have deserved a much shorter and less painful Purgatory, and now I would receive a much greater share in the prayers which were said for us wherever there are Catholics.

Oh, could I but return to the world to help the Poor Souls! I certainly would interest myself in their sad plight! What devout prayers would I say for them! How solicitous I would be to awaken in the faithful the most tender sympathy and pity for them!

Pious Exercises

Resolution.—Today I will do everything possible to assist the souls of the faithful departed from the mission fields of Melanesia and Mikronesia. (New Ireland, New Britain, the Solomon, Gilbert and Marshall Islands and New Guinea). I also recommend myself to those who are entering heaven at this moment.

Thought for the day.—Thus spoke the guilt-burdened brothers of innocent Joseph one to another: "We deserve to suffer these things, because we have sinned against our brother, seeing the anguish of his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear; therefore, is this affliction come upon us." (Gen. 42, 21).

Exercise.—Spread, as much as possible, the devotion "Daily Pilgrimage to Purgatory." The Pour Souls will be grateful to you.

Special Intention.—Pray for the soul which had the greatest devotion to Our Lady of the Sacred Heart.

Motive.—In doing so you cause the Mother of God great delight; she will obtain for you, through the intercession of this soul, the grace of a true devotion to the Sacred Heart.

Prayer.—O Lord God Almighty, I beseech Thee, by the Precious Blood, which gushed forth from the side of Thy Divine Son Jesus, in the sight of, and to the extreme pain of His most holy Mother, deliver the souls in Purgatory, and especially that soul which was the most devout to Our Lady of the Sacred Heart and Queen of Heaven; that it may soon attain unto Thy glory, there to praise Thee in her, and her in Thee, world without end. Amen.

Our Father . . . . Hail Mary.

Ejaculation.—Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, pray for us!

300 days.

The Heroic Act Of Charity In Favor Of The Poor Souls In Purgatory

The Heroic Act of Charity is the most beautiful and most effective manifestation of devotion to the Pour Souls, as well as of love of God and neighbor in general. For those of our associates who did not make it as yet, we give the following explanation.

1. Purpose and meaning of the Heroic Act of Charity.

The heroic act of charity in behalf of the souls in Purgatory consists of a voluntary offering, made by one of the faithful in their favor, of all works of satisfaction done in this life, as well as of all suffrages which shall be offered after death. By this act he deposits all these works and suffrages in the hands of the Blessed Virgin, that she may distribute them in behalf of those holy souls whom it is her good pleasure to deliver from the pains of Purgatory, and at the same time he declares that by this personal offering he foregoes in their behalf only the special and personal benefit of those works of satisfaction, so that, if he be a priest, he is not hindered from applying the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass according to the intention of those who give him alms for that purpose.

Every meritorious act performed in the state of sanctifying grace and with a good intention, gains for us the following spiritual privileges: 1. An increase in sanctifying grace and heavenly

glory. 2. Many graces of body and soul for ourselves and for others. 3. Remission of temporal punishment for our sins. Only this third fruit, the satisfactory or expiatory part of the works that we accomplish is conceded or applied to the souls in Purgatory, whereas the fruit of merit and impetration (of prayer), remains ours. The heroic act therefore does not prevent us from praying for ourselves or for others, nor to let others share in our good works.

Remarks

a. In making the heroic act and desiring to gain the indulgences attached to it, one foregoes in truth and in fact, without reservation of any kind, and without exception, the special and personal benefits of all works of satisfaction and suffrage, and deposits them as a voluntary offering to God in the hands of the Blessed Virgin.

b. This act of charity is not a vow and does not bind under sin. It may be revoked at any time. It stands to reason however that, by doing so, one can no longer gain the indulgences attached to the heroic act.

Indulgences

1. The priests who have made this offering may enjoy the benefits of the privileged altar personally every day of the year.

2. All the faithful who have made this act may gain:
   a. A plenary indulgence applicable only to the departed, every day that they receive Holy Communion, provided they visit a church or public oratory and pray for the intention of the Sovereign Pontiff.
   b. A plenary indulgence every Monday, if they hear Mass in suffrage for the souls in Purgatory and fulfill the usual conditions. The sick, old people, those living in the country, travelers, prisoners, etc., who cannot hear Mass on Monday may offer to this end that of the Sunday.
   c. All indulgences granted, or to be granted and gained by the faithful who have made this offering, are applicable to the holy souls in Purgatory, even when this faculty is not so expressed in the formula or decree of the concession of such indulgences.

S.P. Ap., Jan. 26, 1932.

Motives For Making The Heroic Act

1. You gain many indulgences.
2. Innumerable souls are quickly released from Purgatory; heaven is filled with new saints, who will glorify and praise God for all eternity, also in your behalf.
3. You will gain the special love of the Holy Trinity, of Our Savior, and of all the saints,

and you have the promise of Our Lord applied to you: "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy." (Math. 5, 7).

4. After you have made the heroic act, the Poor Souls will become your debtors; in heaven they will labor that you may not be lost, that you shall not suffer Purgatory at all, or at least be released from it soon.
5. The Blessed Virgin receives an increase of signal veneration, since she will be proclaimed, loved and invoked as the most loving Queen of the Poor Souls and sweet dispenser of our merits to them. There can be no doubt that she will have a special affection for those who love and honor her in this way, both while they are in this world and after they have passed into eternity.

Unnecessary Apprehension In Regard To The Heroic Act

Do not be afraid that you will suffer any loss by this act of charity. Neither need you fear that you yourself will be in danger of having to endure a long and painful Purgatory. On the contrary, you can only gain by it, since you will enjoy the special love of the Most Holy Trinity, of Our Savior, the Blessed Virgin, and of all the saints. Who shall fare better in the end: he who relies solely on the justice of God, or he who heroically offers his merits to the Poor Souls and trusts entirely in God's infinite mercy

and generosity? The latter without doubt. In making the heroic act of charity, therefore, you have nothing to fear for yourself; you can only gain by it.

Nor need you fear that the souls of your relatives, friends and benefactors will be slighted in the least. The Blessed Virgin does not distribute arbitrarily the good works offered for the Poor Souls, but according to that measure of charity and justice which God Himself employs in the distribution of His graces. She will therefore favor with your merits preferably those souls towards whom you have special obligations.

Many persons, distinguished by their position, learning and holiness, have made this heroic act in favor of the Poor Souls and will not regret it in eternity. Follow their example, and likewise offer the atoning merits of your good works for the comfort and deliverance of the Poor Souls.

No special formula for making the heroic act is prescribed. For your convenience however, we herewith give the formula taken from the works of St. Alphonse de Liguori. Its briefness lends itself to a frequent and profitable renewal of this act.

"Oh my God, in union with the merits of Jesus and Mary, I offer Thee for the souls in Purgatory, all my satisfactory works, as well as those which may be applied to me by others during my life, and after my death. And, so as to be more agreeable to the divine Heart of

Jesus and more helpful to the departed, I place them all in the hands of the merciful Virgin Mary.

INVOCATIONS FOR THE POOR SOULS

We beseech Thee, O Lord, help the souls detained in the fire of Purgatory, whom Thou hast redeemed with Thy precious Blood.

Dear Lord Jesus, grant them (or him) eternal rest. 300 days.

The Daily Pilgrimage To Purgatory

A Pious Union of Prayer

1. Its Object.

"In union with the Divine Heart of Jesus make a short pilgrimage to Purgatory at night. Offer Him all your activities of the day and ask Him to apply His merits to the suffering souls. At the same time implore them to obtain for you the grace to live and die in the love and friendship of this divine Heart. May He never find in you any resistance to His holy will nor any wish to thwart His design in your regard. Fortunate will you be, if you succeed in obtaining deliverance for some of these imprisoned souls, for you will gain as many friends in heaven."

2. Its Purpose.

The purpose of this "Pious Union" is to obtain relief and deliverance from Purgatory for the Poor Souls. Its secondary aim is the attainment of personal holiness, the conversion of sinners

and the acquisition of the necessary spiritual and temporal graces.

3. Its Privileges.

1. Special protection of the Sacred Heart, Who considers every act of charity towards the Poor Souls as done to Himself.
2. Gratitude of the souls in Purgatory. "If only you knew," writes St. Margaret Mary, "with what great longing these holy souls yearn for this new 'remedy,' which relieves them so effectively of their sufferings. For this is what they call the devotion to the Sacred Heart, especially the sacrifice of the holy Mass offered in His honor."

In another place the Saint says: "Ingratitude has never entered heaven."

3. A share in the prayers and good works of the associates.
4. The departed members of this "Pious Union," particularly those who have been specially recommended, receive unceasingly the fruits of the numerous holy Masses, offered for the intention of this association.

4. Its Obligations.

1. Promise without binding yourself in conscience, to meditate every day, no matter how briefly, on Purgatory or some other pious practice, e. g., on some ejaculatory prayer to which indulgences applicable to the Poor Souls are attached.

2. Send, if possible once a year, a holy Mass for the intention of this "Pious Union" to the *Sacred Heart Monastery, 305 So. Lake St., Aurora, Illinois.* Offer for the same intention all the Masses you attend, all the holy Communions you receive, all the good works you perform, particularly those which have for their purpose the veneration of the Sacred Heart.

Remarks

1. Help to spread the devotion to the Sacred Heart, so dear and beneficial to the suffering souls by sending occasionally a small donation to the headquarters of the "Pious Union," the Sacred Heart Monastery, Aurora, Illinois.
2. Distribute the booklet: "Daily Pilgrimage to Purgatory."
3. Enroll, if you have not yet done so, in the Archconfraternity of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart. All of its indulgences are applicable to the Poor Souls.

   For enrollment apply to the Sacred Heart Monastery, Aurora, Illinois.

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